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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

SATURDAY, August 5, 1939.

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SUBJECT: "DISHES FROM MEAT LEFTOVERS." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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Of all the problems housewives have to solve, there's none more familiar and frequent than leftovers. I mean the odds and ends from dinner the family didn't quite eat up--the foods that have made one appearance at the table but are too good to throw away--the bits of this and that you have to fix up in some different way to serve again.

Of course, if you're the wife of a multimillionairs, you probably won't bother much about leftovers. But if you're like most wives and have to feed your family on a moderate income and save where you can, then you're interested in making good use of leftovers. And the chances are that you're interested especially in meat leftovers because meat is such an item on the food bill.

Fortunately, there are many ways to use meat leftovers--good ways, easy ways and quick ways, too, because the meat is already cooked. You can cut the meat in small pieces and use it in stews like chop suey and curry or in meat pie. Or you can chop the meat in a food-chopper and use it in hash, stuffed peppers, sandwiches, and biscuit mixtures.

Whatever dish you choose to make of meat leftovers will taste and look better if you remember some general rules. The first rule is never to recook meat so long that it hardens and loses what flavor it has. The least possible reheating saves most flavor. Another rule is never to use much water in the mixture because water dilutes the flavor and makes the dish tasteless, colorless and watery. If you want to develop flavor and incidentally give the mixture a browner color, brown the



diced or ground meat a few minutes in hot fat. To add flavor and make the left-over bits go farther, you can add onion, celery and celery leaves, green pepper, tomatoes, mushrooms and chopped parsley. Then you can do a great deal to help the dish by careful use of seasonings like curry powder, mustard, a tiny pinch of powdered clove, or a few drops of tabasco sauce. If you want a brown mixture, brown the celery and onion in fat at the same time you are browning the meat, and use browned flour to thicken the gravy. If you have two kinds of meat left, so much the better. Beef, veal and lamb all are good combined with ham or bacon--the mild-flavored meats with the cured meats, you see.

Well, there are some general tips about using leftover meat. Now about making special dishes. Let's start with hash because every so often I get a letter from a housewife who says she just can't make good hash. Here's how to make good southern hash. Start with cooked meat and gravy if you have it. (If you haven't gravy, meat broth will do. If you haven't meat broth, you can make some by dissolving 1 or 2 bouillon cubes in water.) Cut the meat in small pieces and brown it in fat. Then cut up either raw or cooked potatoes, slice an onion and a green pepper, and brown these with the meat. Add the gravy or broth and cook slowly on top of the stove. If you have an oven going, you can bake this hash in the oven until it is brown over the top. Just remember about browning the ingredients first and about not using too much moisture.

One of the most popular stews the world over was invented in India. Yes, I'm referring to meat curry. To make it you can use leftover cooked pork, lamb, veal or beef--whatever you happen to have. Slice an onion and cook it in 2 or 3 tablespoons of fat. Then add a quart of sliced tart apples or green tomatoes. Cover and cook until tender. Then chop 1 pint or 2 cups of meat, and add it to the onion-and-apple-or-tomato mixture. Heat altogether. If the mixture is too thick, add a little meat broth, gravy or water. Season with curry powder and salt. Serve with flaky boiled rice.



A different way to use chopped leftover meat is in cabbage rolls -- cabbage leaves rolled around a soft meat mixture and baked in gravy. Here's how you make the meat mixture. Chop meat and mix it with breadcrumbs, or cooked rice, or mashed potatoes. Add melted fat and an onion chopped fine. Moisten with gravy or milk and season with salt and pepper. Now you're ready to roll it in a cabbage leaf. Wash fresh green cabbage leaves and wilt them in hot salted water until they become limp enough to roll. Put some of the meat mixture on each leaf and roll it up. Place the rolls carefully in a baking dish, add hot gravy or a very little hot water, cover the baking dish and bake in a moderate oven for about half an hour.

When you're going on a picnic you may like to substitute something new for meat sandwiches. Try meat turnovers. They're something like individual chopped meat pie made with rich biscuit crust. Season chopped cooked meat with onion, celery and parsley. Moisten slightly with gravy or tomato juice. Add salt and pepper. Make a rich biscuit dough and roll this dough out in rounds. On each round place some of the seasoned meat filling. Fold the edges of the dough together to make turnovers. Bake in a hot oven.

Well, you see how meat leftovers can go to make hash or curry, cabbage rolls or turnovers, to mention only 4 possibilities. Did you notice how each of these recipes brought out the rules I listed at the start? Did you notice that in most cases the meat was browned in hot fat first and that onion, green pepper, celery and tomatoes were some of the foods added to the meat? Did you notice that usually the onion and celery was browned along with the meat? And did you notice that none of the recipes called for much water or for long cooking?

That's the way to make the most of meat leftovers.

